

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An automotive vehicle convertible roof comprising:
 - at least three substantially rigid roof panels each moveable from a raised position to a stowed position; and
 - a single pair of mounting brackets operable to be fixedly connected to and positioned on opposite sides of the vehicle,
 - wherein each of said roof panels is pivotally connected to said pair of brackets with each roof panel rearward of a forwardmost roof panel being directly pivotally connected to said brackets.
2. The convertible roof of claim 1, wherein a forwardmost two of said roof panels are directly pivotally connected together.
3. The convertible roof of claim 2, wherein interior surfaces of said forwardmost two roof panels face one another when in said stowed position.
4. The convertible roof of claim 3, wherein an exterior surface of a forwardmost roof panel faces upwardly when in said stowed position.
5. The convertible roof of claim 1, wherein a forwardmost roof panel is pivotally connected to said brackets with a pair of moveable links.

6. The convertible roof of claim 5, wherein said forwardmost two of said roof panels, said pair of moveable links and said brackets define a pair of at least four-bar linkages.

7. The convertible roof of claim 1, wherein a rearwardmost two of said roof panels and said brackets define a pair of at least four-bar linkages.

8. The convertible roof of claim 1, further comprising an actuator operable to move said roof panels between said raised and stowed positions and wherein said actuator drives a link connecting a rearwardmost two of said roof panels.

9. A convertible roof for a vehicle, the convertible roof comprising:
at least three substantially rigid roof panels each moveable from a
raised position to a stowed position;
a rearmost two roof panels each being directly pivotally connected
to fixed locations relative to the vehicle; and
a movable link pivotally connected to said rearmost two roof panels
defining an at least four-bar linkage with said rearmost two roof panels and said
fixed locations,
said moveable link being pivotally connected to said rearmost two
roof panels at locations that are between majority portions of said rearmost two
roof panels and said pivotal connections to said fixed locations.

10. The convertible roof of claim 9, wherein a forwardmost of said roof
panels is directly pivotally connected to one of said rearmost two roof panels.

11. The convertible roof of claim 10, wherein said moveable link is a
first moveable link and said forwardmost roof panel is pivotally connected to a
fixed location on the vehicle with a second moveable link and defines an at least
four-bar linkage with said one of said rearmost two roof panels and said second
moveable link.

12. The convertible roof of claim 9, further comprising an actuator directly connected to said moveable link and operable to move said roof panels between said raised and stowed positions.

13. The convertible roof of claim 9, wherein an exterior surface of a forwardmost of said roof panels faces upwardly when in said stowed position.

14. An automotive vehicle convertible roof comprising at least three substantially rigid roof panels each moveable from a raised position to a stowed position, wherein

an interior surface of a third roof panel faces a majority of an exterior surface of a second roof panel when said roof panels are in said stowed position.

15. The convertible roof of claim 14, wherein said second and third roof panels are each directly pivotally connected to fixed locations relative to the vehicle.

16. The convertible roof of claim 15, wherein a first roof panel is pivotally connected to a fixed location relative to the vehicle with a moveable link.

17. The convertible roof of claim 14, wherein an exterior surface of a first roof panel faces upward when in said stowed position.

18. The convertible roof of claim 14, wherein a first roof panel and said second roof panel are directly pivotally connected together.

19. An automotive vehicle convertible roof comprising:
 - at least three substantially rigid roof panels each moveable from a raised position to a stowed position;
 - a moveable link directly pivotally connected to a rearmost two of said roof panels and defining an at least four-bar linkage with said rearmost two roof panels; and
 - an actuator operable to move said roof panels between said raised and stowed positions, wherein
 - said actuator is directly pivotally connected to said moveable link.
20. The convertible roof of claim 19, wherein each of said rearmost two roof panels is directly pivotally connected to fixed locations relative to the vehicle.
21. The convertible roof of claim 20, wherein said moveable link is a first moveable link and a forwardmost of said roof panels is pivotally connected to a fixed location relative to the vehicle with a second moveable link.
22. The convertible roof of claim 19, wherein a forwardmost of said roof panels is directly pivotally connected to one of said rearmost two roof panels.
23. The convertible roof of claim 22, wherein said forwardmost roof panel is coupled said one of said rearmost roof panels with a four-bar linkage.

24. The convertible roof of claim 19, wherein said at least four-bar linkage is a four-bar linkage.

25. The convertible roof of claim 19, wherein an exterior surface of a forwardmost of said roof panels faces upward when in said stowed position.

26. The convertible roof of claim 19, wherein interior surfaces of a forwardmost two of said roof panels face one another when in said stowed position.